

[By Jenna Pizzi](#)

More than 200 people filled the American Legion hall here Wednesday evening to protest a proposal by the U.S. Postal Service to close the mail processing facility in White River Junction.

The closure of the processing center is part of a national effort to consolidate facilities to make the postal service, which has been struggling financially, more efficient. Closing the local facility would mean the loss of 51 postal service jobs.

Gov. Peter Shumlin, Rep. Peter Welch and Sens. Bernard Sanders and Patrick Leahy were at the meeting to speak out against the closure.

Shumlin chastised the postal service, calling it "sheer idiocy" to close the facility. "We who live in Vermont, where Internet service is spotty, where cell service is sometimes nonexistent," said Shumlin, "need the postal service more than anywhere else in America. Go find somewhere else to find your pretend savings."

Sanders called the proposed closure of 252 mail processing facilities around the country a "death spiral for the post office."

Welch addressed the many mail handlers in attendance, saying he will work to pass legislation to stop the closures and protect their jobs.

"Not only are your jobs worth saving, but the U.S. Postal Service is worth saving," Welch said.

Employees and customers alike addressed the postal service representatives at the meeting to say why the White River Junction facility should be spared.

"How do we expect to save the service by cutting service?" asked Bill Cremer, a postal employee and president of the local mail handlers union in White River Junction.

The postal service says that under the nationwide consolidation plan, mail that is now delivered the next day would take two days.